

Amendments to the Claims:

Rewrite the claims as set forth below. This listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

1-31. (Cancelled)

32. (New) A method of controlling electronic mail (e-mail) message transmission over a network comprising:

encoding, by a third entity using an encoding algorithm, a third set of e-mail addresses to which an e-mail address should not be sent;

receiving, by said third entity, a first set of encoded e-mail addresses from said first entity and said second set of encoded e-mail addresses from said second entity, wherein said first set of encoded e-mail addresses were encoded using said encoding algorithm and further represent e-mail addresses to which an e-mail message could be sent and wherein said second set of encoded e-mail addresses were encoded using said encoding algorithm and further represent e-mail addresses to which an e-mail address should not be sent; and

generating, by said third entity, a fourth set of encoded e-mail addresses representing e-mail addresses to which said e-mail message may be sent, wherein said fourth set of encoded e-mail addresses comprises encoded e-mail addresses that are in said first set of encoded e-mail addresses but not in said second set of encoded e-mail addresses or in said third set of encoded e-mail addresses.

33. (New) The method of claim 32, further comprising:

sending, by said third entity, to each of a first entity and a second entity said encoding algorithm for encoding e-mail addresses.

34. (New) The method of claim 32, wherein:

said first entity is an e-mail mass mailer;

said second entity is a source of said e-mail message; and

said third entity is an e-mail list manager.

35. (New) The method of claim 32, wherein generating, by said third entity, said fourth set of encoded e-mail addresses to which said e-mail message may be sent comprises:

sorting said first set of encoded e-mail addresses into a first ordered list of encoded e-mail addresses wherein said encoded e-mail addresses are in ascending order; and

sorting at least one of said second set of encoded e-mail addresses and said third list of encoded e-mail addresses into at least one of a second and third ordered list of encoded e-mail addresses wherein encoded e-mail addresses are in ascending order.

36. (New) The method of claim 35, wherein generating, by said third entity, said fourth set of encoded e-mail addresses to which said e-mail message may be sent further comprises:

removing the first entry from said first list upon a detection in said at least one of said second and third ordered lists of the first entry in said first ordered list;

beginning with a first entry in said first ordered list of encoded e-mail addresses, and beginning with a first entry in said at least one of said second and third ordered lists, comparing the first entry in said first ordered list to the first entry in said at least one second and third ordered lists then successive entries in said at least one of said second and third ordered lists, until a value of an entry in said at least one of second and third ordered lists equals or exceeds a value of the first entry in said first list; and

removing the first entry from said first list upon a detection in said at least one of said second and third ordered lists of the first entry in said first ordered list.

37. (New) The method of claim 35, wherein generating, by said third entity, said fourth set of encoded e-mail addresses to which said e-mail message may be sent further comprises copying entries of said first ordered list of encoded e-mail addresses into said fourth set of encoded e-mail addresses that do not exist in said at least one of said second and third ordered lists of encoded e-mail addresses.

38. (New) The method of claim 32, wherein:

said encoding algorithm is a hashing algorithm; and

said first, second, third and fourth sets of encoded e-mail addresses are first, second, third and fourth sets of hash codes, respectively.

39. (New) The method of claim 35,

said encoding algorithm is a hashing algorithm; and

wherein said first, second and third ordered lists of encoded e-mail addresses are first, second and third ordered lists of hash codes, respectively.

40. (New) The method of claim 38, wherein said first, second, third and fourth sets of hash codes are comprised of alpha-numeric characters and are of the same length.

41. (New) A method of controlling electronic mail (e-mail) message transmission over a network comprising:

sending, by a third entity, to each of a first entity and a second entity an encoding algorithm for encoding e-mail addresses;

encoding, by a first entity using said encoding algorithm, a first set of e-mail addresses to which an e-mail message could be sent;

encoding, by a second entity using said encoding algorithm, a second set of e-mail addresses to which an e-mail message should not be sent;

encoding, by said third entity, a third set of e-mail addresses to which an e-mail address should not be sent;

receiving, by said third entity, said first set of encoded e-mail addresses and said second set of encoded e-mail addresses; and

generating, by said third entity, a fourth set of encoded e-mail addresses representing e-mail addresses to which said e-mail message may be sent, wherein said fourth set of encoded e-mail addresses comprises encoded e-mail addresses that are in said first set of encoded e-mail addresses but not in said second set of encoded e-mail addresses or in said third set of encoded e-mail addresses.

42. (New) The method of claim 41, wherein:

said first set of e-mail addresses was previously obtained by said first entity independent of said second entity; and

said second set of e-mail address was previously obtained by said second entity independent of said first entity.

43. (New) The method of claim 41, further comprising:

specifying an e-mail address domain name;

prior to receiving, by said third entity, said first set of encoded e-mail addresses, purging one of:

all e-mail addresses in said first set of e-mail address having said domain name; and

all encoded e-mail addresses in said first set of encoded e-mail addresses associated with e-mail addresses having said domain name.

44. (New) The method of claim 41, further comprising:

sending said fourth set of encoded e-mail addresses to said first entity via a data network;

identifying, by said first entity, e-mail addresses that are encoded in said fourth list of encoded e-mail addresses; and

e-mailing said message to said identified e-mail addresses.

45. (New) The method of claim 41, wherein:

said first entity is an e-mail mass mailer;

said second entity is a source of said e-mail message; and

said third entity is an e-mail list manager.

46. (New) The method of claim 41, wherein:

said encoding algorithm is a hashing algorithm; and

said first, second, third and fourth sets of encoded e-mail addresses are first, second, third and fourth sets of hash codes, respectively.

47. (New) A method of controlling electronic mail (e-mail) message transmission over a network comprising:

encoding, by a third entity using an encoding algorithm, a third set of e-mail addresses to which an e-mail address should not be sent;

receiving, by said third entity, a first set of encoded e-mail addresses from said first entity and said second set of encoded e-mail addresses from said second entity, wherein said first set of encoded e-mail addresses represent e-mail addresses to which an e-mail message could be sent and wherein said second set of encoded e-mail addresses represent e-mail addresses to which an e-mail address should not be sent; and

generating, by said third entity, a fourth set of encoded e-mail addresses representing e-mail addresses to which said e-mail message may not be sent, wherein said fourth set of encoded e-mail addresses comprises encoded e-mail addresses that are in one of said second set of

encoded e-mail addresses and third set of encoded e-mails but not in said first set of encoded e-mail addresses.

48. (New) The method of claim 47, further comprising:
sending, by said third entity, to each of a first entity and a second entity said encoding algorithm for encoding e-mail addresses;

49. (New) The method of claim 47, wherein:
said first entity is an e-mail mass mailer;
said second entity is a source of said e-mail message; and
said third entity is an e-mail list manager.

50. (New) The method of claim 47, wherein:
said encoding algorithm is a hashing algorithm;
said first, second, third and fourth sets of encoded e-mail addresses are first, second, third and fourth sets of hash codes, respectively; and
said first, second, third and fourth sets of hash codes are comprised of alpha-numeric characters and are of the same length.

51. (New) A method of controlling electronic mail (e-mail) message transmission over a network comprising:
sending, by a third entity, to each of a first entity and a second entity an encoding algorithm for encoding e-mail addresses;
encoding, by a first entity using said encoding algorithm, a first set of e-mail addresses to which an e-mail message could be sent;
encoding, by a second entity using said encoding algorithm, a second set of e-mail addresses to which an e-mail message should not be sent;

encoding, by said third entity using said encoding algorithm, a third set of e-mail addresses to which an e-mail address should not be sent;

receiving, by said third entity, said first set of encoded e-mail addresses and said second set of encoded e-mail addresses; and

generating, by said third entity, a fourth set of encoded e-mail addresses representing e-mail addresses to which said e-mail message may not be sent, wherein said fourth set of encoded e-mail addresses comprises encoded e-mail addresses that are in one of said second set of encoded e-mail addresses and third set of encoded e-mails but not in said first set of encoded e-mail addresses.

52. (New) The method of claim 51, wherein:

said first set of e-mail addresses was previously obtained by said first entity independent of said second entity; and

said second set of e-mail address was previously obtained by said second entity independent of said first entity.

53. (New) The method of claim 51, further comprising:

specifying an e-mail address domain name;

prior to receiving, by said third entity, said first set of encoded e-mail addresses, purging one of:

all e-mail addresses in said first set of e-mail address having said domain name; and

all encoded e-mail addresses in said first set of encoded e-mail addresses associated with e-mail addresses having said domain name.

54. (New) The method of claim 51, further comprising:

sending, to said first entity via a data network, said fourth set of encoded e-mail addresses representing said e-mail addresses that said e-mail message may not be sent;

identifying, by said first entity, e-mail addresses that said e-mail message may be sent based on the fourth set of encoded e-mail addresses; and

e-mailing said message to said identified e-mail addresses.

55. (New) The method of claim 51, wherein:

said first entity is an e-mail mass mailer;

said second entity is a source of said e-mail message; and

said third entity is an e-mail list manager.

56. (New) The method of claim 51, wherein:

said encoding algorithm is a hashing algorithm; and

said first, second, third and fourth sets of encoded e-mail addresses are first, second, third and fourth sets of hash codes, respectively.

57. (New) An apparatus for controlling electronic mail (e-mail) message transmission over a network comprising:

a third computer operatively coupled to a data network and to memory, wherein said memory contains program instructions such that when executed by said first computer, said third computer is operative to:

encode using an encoding algorithm a third set of e-mail addresses to which an e-mail address should not be sent;

receive a first set of encoded e-mail addresses from said data network and said second set of encoded e-mail addresses from said data network, wherein said first set of encoded e-mail addresses were encoded using said encoding algorithm and further represent e-mail

addresses to which an e-mail message could be sent and wherein said second set of encoded e-mail addresses were encoded using said encoding algorithm and further represent e-mail addresses to which an e-mail address should not be sent; and

generate a fourth set of encoded e-mail addresses representing e-mail addresses to which said e-mail message may be sent, wherein said fourth set of encoded e-mail addresses comprises encoded e-mail addresses that are in said first set of encoded e-mail addresses but not in said second set of encoded e-mail addresses or in said third set of encoded e-mail addresses.

58. (New) The apparatus of claim 57, wherein said program instructions, when executed by said third computer, further cause said computer to send, to each of a first computer coupled to the data network and a second computer on the data network said encoding algorithm for encoding e-mail addresses.

59. (New) The apparatus of claim 57, wherein

said first computer is associated with an e-mail mass mailer;

said second computer is associated with a source of said e-mail message; and

said third computer is associated with an e-mail list manager.

60. (New) The apparatus of claim 57, wherein:

said encoding algorithm is a hashing algorithm;

said first, second, third and fourth sets of encoded e-mail addresses are first, second, third and fourth sets of hash codes, respectively; and

said first, second, third and fourth sets of encoded e-mail addresses are first, second, third and fourth sets of has codes, respectively.

61. (New) The apparatus of claim 57, wherein:

said first set of e-mail addresses was previously obtained by said first entity independent of said second entity; and

said second set of e-mail address was previously obtained by said second entity independent of said first entity.

62. (New) The apparatus of claim 57, wherein said programming instructions, when executed by said third computer, further cause said third computer to:

specifying an e-mail address domain name associated with e-mail address to which said e-mail address should not be sent; and

sending said e-mail address to said first computer.

63. (New) The apparatus of claim 57, wherein said programming instructions, when executed by said third computer, further causes said third computer to send said fourth set of encoded e-mail addresses to said first entity via a data network.